

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 are pending in the present application. After entry of the above amendments, Claims 1-5 have been cancelled and new Claims 6-28 have been added. Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance, which prompt and favorable action is respectfully requested.

New Claims 6-10 are similar in scope to claims 1-5 of U.S. Patent No. 5,777,990, a parent case in relation to the present case, but are not recited in "means for" form. Since claims 1-5 of U.S. Patent No. 5,777,990 are allowed, Claims 6-10 are allowable.

New Claims 11-15 are in the form of "means for" claims and are similar to claims 11, 2-5, respectively, of U.S. Patent No. 5,777,990, a parent case in relation to the present case. Similarly, Claims 16-20 are method claims and are similar to claims 11, 2-5, respectively, of U.S. Patent No. 5,777,990. Since claims 11, 2-5 of U.S. Patent No. 5,777,990 are allowed, Claims 11-20 are allowable.

New Claims 21-24 are similar in scope to Claims 2-5 of U.S. Patent No. 5,777,990, a parent case in relation to the present case. Since claims 2-5 of U.S. Patent No. 5,777,990 are allowed, Claims 21-24 are allowable.

New Claims 25-28 are apparatus claims similar in scope to Claims 1-2 and 6-7 of U.S. Patent No. 6,292,476, a parent case in relation to the present case. Since claims 1-2 and 6-7 of U.S. Patent No. 6,292,476 are allowed, Claims 25-28 are allowable.

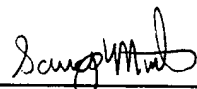
CONCLUSION

In light of the amendments contained herein, Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance, for which early action is requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 17-0026.

Respectfully submitted,

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